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STATINTL

NEVER THE TWAIN . . .

COPYRIGHT Senators and Psychiatrists

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It was a dubious encounter between senators and psychiatrists at the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

The trouble was that all senators are amateur psychiatrists and the two psychiatrists were avowedly amateur geopoliticians. Both sides were so afraid of trespassing on each others' territory that they never really met.

Chairman J. William Fulbright, who has been analyzing the American character as revealed in its foreign policy, called in the two experts—Charles E. Osgood of the University of Illinois and Dr. Jerome D. Frank of Johns Hopkins University—to corroborate his view that Americans can break the obnoxious behavior pattern of the large, rich nations of history.

The psychiatrists would not commit themselves to his "arrogance of power" theory or help him expose what he considers our neurotic fear of other nations.

Finally he said with some exasperation, "It is the duty of psychologists to change that, isn't it? Who is going to change human nature if you are not?"

The two mind-readers looked at him with compassionate smiles. They are apparently accustomed to being mistaken for magicians. It was the clash of two disciplines. Politicians

want answers to problems. Psychologists ventilate situations.

"What is the matter with us?" Fulbright demanded.

Osgood, a grey-haired man rather given to the language of his trade, said, "We are rotating our sense of responsibility onto the parallels with this great fear (of communism)."

If Fulbright was frustrated in his attempt to find professional endorsement of his diagnosis of our power syndrome, other senators suffered even more from the communications gap.

Sen. Bourke B. Hickenlooper, R-Iowa, was simply dumbfounded by the presentation of the two experts. When it was his turn to ask questions, he sat absolutely still for a full moment and admitted he didn't know what to ask.

Finally with not so much as a nod at Freud, he waded in boldly. "We are all biological mechanisms, aren't we? Is there any question about that? Is there any question that survival is the prime law of nature?"

The two experts, who had just finished presenting long papers designed to show that people of every nation are in the grip of some ideological obsession which gives them larger identity but which clouds their vision and judgment, sighed.

Frank said, "People give up their bodies to preserve themselves."

Hickenlooper went to the animal world. "What about lions and tigers?"

Osgood explained that "one of

the main things which divides man from animals is his language and his capacity to symbolize."

Hickenlooper retreated. "I don't know how you get hold of the psyche and push it around to where you want it."

Sen. Clifford P. Case, R-N.J., seemed even more unnerved by the large, vague concepts being run by him. He demanded therapy, not analysis.

How would they advise Britain to deal with Rhodesia, he wanted to know. How should Israel regard the Arabs? How should the Russians cope with the Red Chinese? The experts begged off, pleading the limited application of their observations.

Finally Case decided that the experts and Fulbright were being entirely too clinical about his native land.

"We are not as bad as many countries," he said stoutly.

Fulbright tried to soothe him. "I don't want to leave the impression we are acting worse than any other great nation."

The chairman seemed resigned to the fact that if the country was ready for the couch, the senators were not. He abandoned his pioneer experiment in professional soul-searching with a tentative, "Well the point is, if there is any point. . . ."